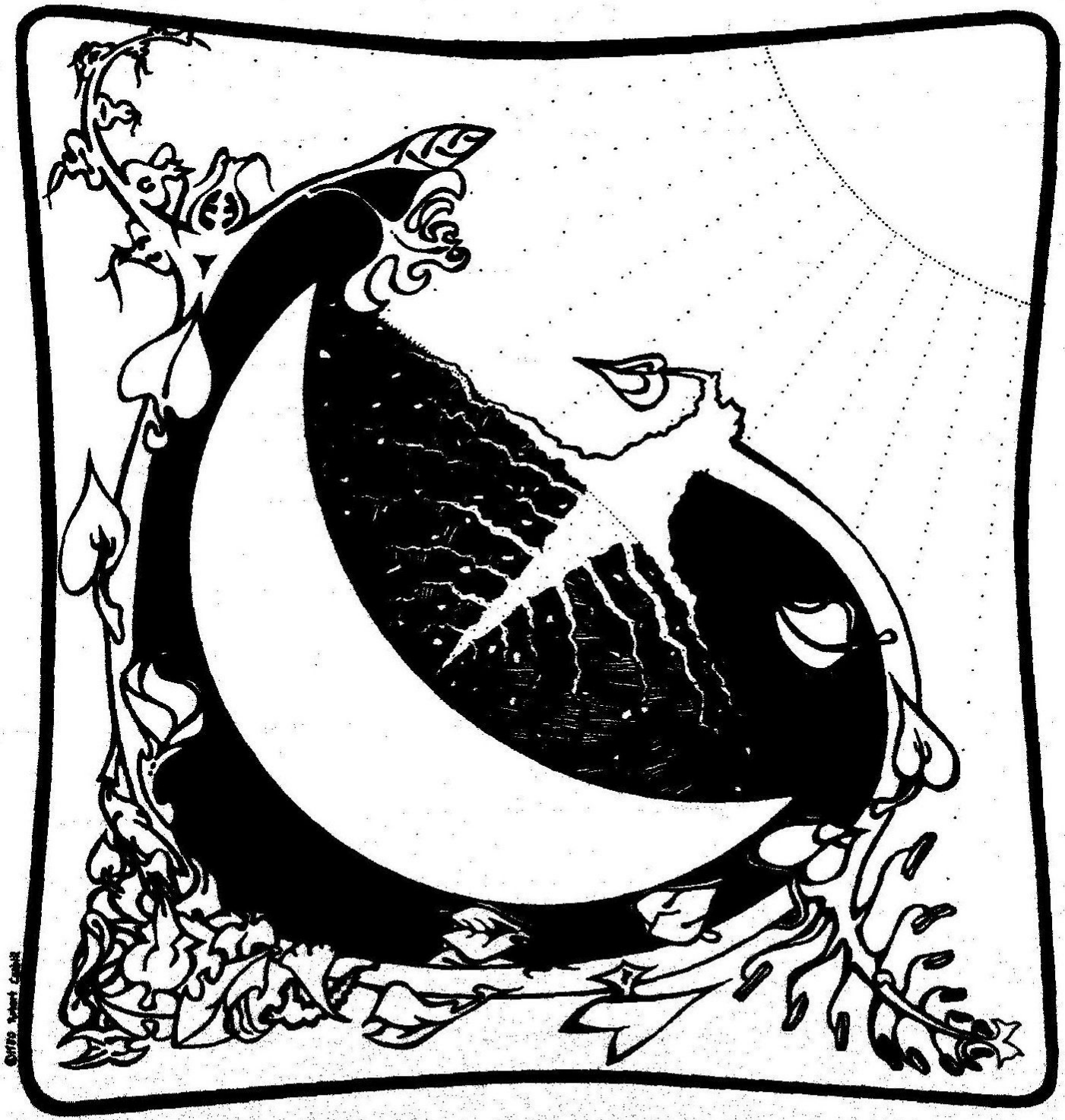
THE BI-MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Bisexual Center

Volume 4, Number 4 July/August 1980



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Hey. The Bi Center is an all-volunteer organization and in order to stay in operation we need some volunteers. There are events, workshops and socials that need energy - yours. Come on over, lend yourself to the Center and meet some fascinating people. Contact David Lourea or Michael Gray at the Center; call 922-2300, or drop in when the Center's open.

MOVING???

Let us know! Recently we have had scores of newsletters returned to us because folks had moved on. This costs us a lot of money we can't afford, and you don't get your newsletter. So please send us address changes. If you know a bi center member who has moved, please remind them - this message may never reach them through the mail.

THE BI-MONTHLY

All contributions to the Bi-Monthly, including announcements, must be in by paste up day.

All articles longer than 50 words must be in by lay-out day. The next issue's planning meeting will be Friday night, August 8th, at 7:30pm. Layout will be Sunday, August 10th, and paste-up will be on August 17th, both starting at noon and running until late afternoon or until completion, whichever is necessary. Come and join us for any part of it.

THE BISEXUAL CENTER

P.O. Box 26227
San Francisco, CA 94126
(415) 922-2300

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membership

	Full-time Student
$6 -	Unemployed, Retired
$12 -	Regular
$13-100	Contributing
$101-1000	Sustaining

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How did you hear about the Bi Center?_____

The APA & The ERA

Maggi Rubenstein, co-founder of the Bi Center and an ERA supporter, took part recently in the protest held at the San Francisco Hilton demanding that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) recind its plan to hold its next meeting in Louisiana, an unratified state. Due to hard work by both APA women and men psychiatrists and supporters their position was reversed! Their statement is as follows:

"The American Psychiatric Association will not hold its 1981 Annual Meeting in New Orleans since Louisiana has not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. The action was taken today by the Association's Board of Trustees at its 1980 Annual Meeting currently being held in San Francisco.

"In addition, the Trustees authorized up to $25,000 for educational expenses to encourage passage of the ERA. The Board also authorized solicitation of voluntary contributions to pay for this educational effort and approximately $3,400 was immediately donated by those present at the meeting.

"Special communications will be directed to Louisiana regarding the action and to Illinois where a vote on ERA will soon occur.

"APA President Donald Langsley stated that the members of the Board of Trustees and the Assembly of the ERA are convinced that ERA is a psychiatric issue. The fact that women do not have equal rights has been demonstrated to influence their mental health. Doctor Langsley said that 'the APA will courageously lead this effort to bring this message to the world by not meeting in a state which has not ratified ERA. Although this will be distressing to those members of APA who recently voted against economic boycott, both the Board and Assembly felt that a vigorous effort is absolutely essential.'

"In addition, Melvin Lipsett, M.D., Speaker of the Assembly, reported that the Assembly and Board have voted to (1) reaffirm support of ERA, (2) mount a vigorous educational effort to convince the public and legislators of the mental health implications of ERA, (3) to use the legislative network of APA to educate legislators and governors in states which have not ratified ERA and (4) to have APA officials meet with the governor and appropriate legislative leaders in Louisiana in another educational effort."

Wait!
Let me feel you,
bending your soul,
As we lay,
Let me touch
Your trembling
heaving
body.
Wait!
Let me anticipate
The blending
Gasping night,
feel you fill me
holding
tight.

Wait!
Let us cherish
each other
our maleness
straining,
Then bursting out
to sigh and softness.
Wait!
Let me
Love
You

Michael

A SENSE OF DECENCY

by JULIE

Sue, my new roomate of three weeks, who is straight, was speaking to my ex-roommate who had tried to seduce me by force the previous week, and who had his ego hurt when I told him where to get off. Seeking revenge, he found a stray Bi-Center newsletter when I wasn't home, and told Sue about it. She relayed the conversation to me with much amusement. (She doesn't know I am Bisexual.)

"She wouldn't make out with me because she's a Lesbian. I found a newsletter that she brought home," he had said. Defensively, she replied, "Can't you just accept the fact that she's not interested? She does't like you. And that brochure doesn't mean anything. Someone on the street probably handed it to her. They do that all the time. I'm always carrying stuff in. Last week it was an invitation from a Jewish Children-of-Jesus Church. Besides, she's never made a pass at me." "She's not a Lesbian, she has a boyfriend."

Do you see the common misconceptions here? Lets break it down:

1. Bisexuality was immediately polarized to mean Homosexuality or Lesbianism. Bisexual women are Lesbians.
2. I am not a Lesbian (Bisexual), or I would have made a pass by now (3 weeks).
3. I am straight because I have an ongoing male relationship.
4. If I am not straight, then I am a Lesbian (Bisexuality does not exist).
5. If I were a Lesbian, I would make a pass at her. (Because Lesbians make passes at all other women)

Smiling, Sue added "Of course I said you weren't. You don't dress like they do. You don't even act like one." Quite frankly, that is because I am not a Lesbian. (How is it that one should act anyhow?) Bisexual women are not Lesbians. They are Bisexual women. Besides, I hate role playing.

Bisexuality is not the same as Homosexuality; nor does either one make a person promiscuous. I am conservative in my relationships; I am religious, heavily self-disciplined, shy at times, and would never run out and pick up on a stranger. There are times when I am labeled 'straight' or 'Lesbian', by way of present situation. Both, I consider extremism. I am not either, and I always feel that there is a vast separation.

I like being a woman. I like my women modest, and my relationships faithful (not necessarily monogamous). Promiscuity does not appeal to me. It infringes upon my security and sense of balance.

Having a male relationship, as we know, would imply only to the most naive, that one is straight. Or was Sue thinking that bisexuals must have simultaneous male-female relationships in order to qualify?

Obviously, I do not qualify. I am not promiscuous. I have not brought my women lovers home, so I must not have any. I have not made a pass at her, so I must not be interested. If I were a Lesbian, I should most definitely be intereseted, right?

Wrong. She's not my type. Cute, but not appealing. I am neither attracted to straight or Lesbian women. I like a certain physical appearance, personality, air and attitude. My female lovers are special to me. They must be understanding, trustworthy, and we must have a lot in common. They must be interesting, respectful and tolerant. That's a lot to ask for. A street girl would never do.

Whatever made anyone think that a Bisexual has to be indulgent in the first place? I don't believe that my sexual preferences should force me into seducing anyone, or everyone. I dread wearing a label defined by the ignorant masses as sick, indecent, neurotic, promiscuous, perverted, immoral, unreligious, or sex-starved. Bisexuality is not. And obviously enough, I am not.

In reply to our conversation, which she considered amusing enough to share with me, I said "Oh, yeah?" Not much of an answer. It didn't get the response she expected. No criticism. No defense. Yet I felt my sense of decency had been

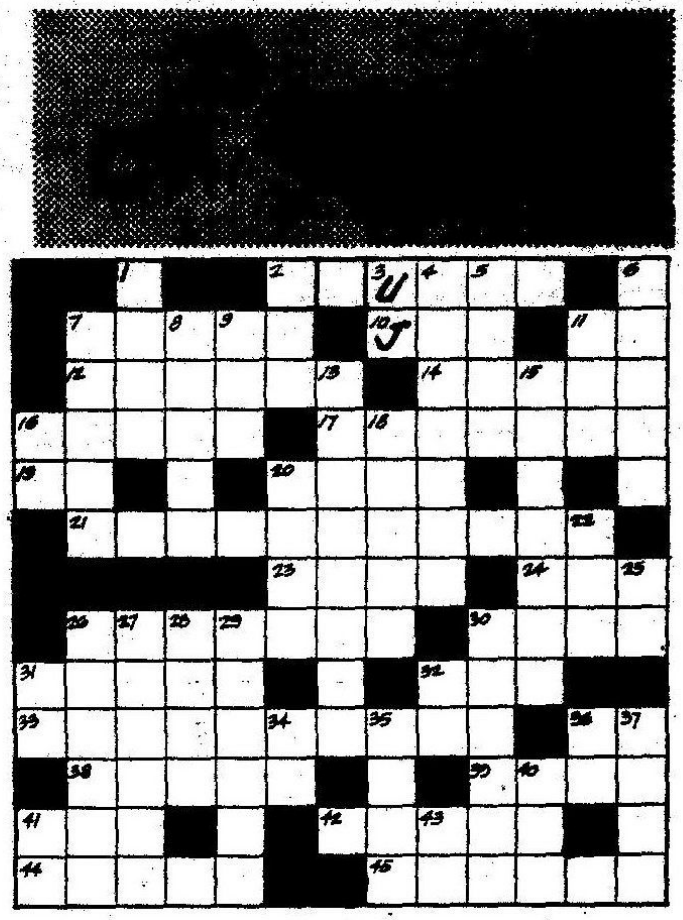
continued on page 7

ACROSS

2. Related, quite closely, to "rape" .
7. "I can tell the way someone ___ by the way they eat!"
10. Type of fish or dessert (first 3 letters)
11. District in London (first syllable)
12. What Adan & Eve must have needed after banishment from Eden
14. Type of singing voice
16. Type of comet
17. "This feels ___," he said, half in __.
19. Second word of a two word expression giving consent
20. Mispelling of the Roman # 1201
21. It takes a licking
23. Traditionally, thought of as a "female" place.
24. "Sweet" company
26. If "General Condition" is one end of the spectrum, "___ Parts" is the other!
30. Made some southern slaves high
31. African nation boycotting the Olympics
32. Affectionate term among siblings or peers
33. Of or pertaining to the unusual fear of gay persons
36. First word of #19 across
37. If unsuccessful at #15 down, one could ___ about it.
39. ___ is to the shore as strings are to a relationship
41. Uncle (Sp.)
42. "This feels __," he said, half in __.
44. What often happens to energy or interest after orgasm
45. To tell a tired story over and over again

DOWN

1. "Understanding" is one type of __ for #37 down to run on.
2. Country boycotting the Olympics (Abbrev.)
3.
4. To throw a fish back into the sea
5. Relative of #15 down
6. Possible fetish item(s)
7. Monetary unit (Fr.)
8. Possible fetish condition
9. The __ to a successful relationship is to keep the doors of communication open
11. Gases & snakes have this in common
13. Cousin of #21 across
15. A carefully scripted & rehearsed substitute for a simple request (v.)
16. District in London (second syllable)
18. What someone's humor must be in order to appreciate #12 across



20. Multifaceted non-precious stone
22. "A little ___ never hurt anyone."
25. Unit of power (Abbrev.)
26. irrational fear
27. Common name for a gay bar
28. Past tense of "I know" (Brooklynese)
29. In the "past", women suffered from this
30. Sign of affection or lust
31. Androgynous actor (initials)
32. Yes (Sp.)
34. Head (Abbrev.)
35. Unclear (Noun)
36. Glass (Abbrev.)
37. A relationship which is difficult but potentially very satisfying
40. When it passes, many more of us will be better off.
41. The first and last letters of a four letter expression celebrating a weekly joy
43. Type of engineer (Abbrev.)

* * *

As fate would have it, there were no winners to the last puzzle, and ironically it has been pointed out that offering free memberships is a violation of board policy. Therefor it has been suspended. From here on, it's for the pleasure of it.

* * *

See page 7 for last issue's puzzle.

CONNECTIONS

by Joyce Boyd (a.k.a. Bret) and
Doug Friedman

Our experiences at the Bisexual Center and articles in the Bi-Monthly have prompted us to share with you some important connections we've observed. This being a short article, we've only touched on what seemed most important to us. That leaves plenty of room for you to add your thoughts.

People are naturally powerful; we have the ability to change things. Unfortunately, almost all of us as children and as adults have been told that we cannot change things. Although we all get this message, certain people are told more often, particularly women, sexual minorities, physically challanged, working class and third world people. This myth was originally told to us by well-meaning adults who had accepted such limitations in their own lives; now we've come to believe it and tell it to each other, thus perpetuating the cycle.

An example of powerless feelings being contradicted is what we went through in starting to write this article: we each planned to write a rough draft of what we wanted to say and then compare notes. Besides the sex difference, Bret is from a working class background and Doug is from a middle class background. Doug arrived with five pages of notes and Bret arrived with nothing (my, my:).

Bret: I feel terrible. I didn't write anything. I'm sorry, but I don't think I want to write this.

Doug: Has something happened?

Bret: No, it's just that I haven't written anything but letters in over two years. I can't do this.

Doug: Oh, really? It looks like something else is on your mind too.

Bret: Well, I feel like I don't have anything to say and besides I'm real busy and I have more important things to do.

Doug: You've expressed yourself very clearly on these issues before. I wonder if you're just feeling powerless?

Bret: Well, maybe. Let me see what you came up with. (After reading Doug's notes.) Hey! I think you're right, I know this stuff. I also think your language is too complex -- not everyone has a masters degree, you know.

Doug: You know, that's been a problem of mine -- I've been trained to use big words. I think your clear thinking would help to make our article more accessible to people.

Bret: And you can help me push past the powerless feelings.

One way to counter our feelings of powerlessness is to affirm ourselves by saying things such as "I can do anything! in a positive tone. It sounds silly at first only because it contradicts the feelings of powerlessness we have been taught to believe. With affirmation and the support of friends (like Doug gave to Bret) we can reclaim all of that "lost" power.

One of the ways our powerlessness is kept in place is by language. Many words which are used to describe people do subtle violence to them. For example: the word "girl" to describe an adult female subtly encourages both the woman and the person using the term to think of and treat her as a child. Similarly, the tradition of using "he, him, his" to describe both females and males premotes the practice of seeing only men as powerful and of ignoring over half the world's people.

We have observed that often, at mixed Bisexual Center events, there are more men than women. We believe the major cause of this situation is sexist attitudes and behaviours such as the ones explained earlier. Doug once heard a male Bi Center volunteer talk of "manning the phone". He asked the volunteer if women could do the phone work for the Bi Center. The volunteer replied that only men were currently doing it.

Doug said that perhaps using that kind of language is a reason why.

Women shouldn't always be expected to take the responsibility for interupting sexism; it is important that men stand up as women's allies and educate their brothers. Sexist remarks and actions can be treated as requests for information. We encourage everyone, and particularly Bi Center members to examine the implications of the words they use.

In cultures such as ours, in which males are assumed to be the clear thinkers, the doers, the judges, those who define experience, it is common for males to state their perceptions as facts. Females, on the other hand, tend to recognize their opinions as just that, opinions, not imposing on others their ideas as reality. Traditional male competitive behaviour can easily be observed in groups: interupting, dominating the conversation, not listening, and "one-ups-man-ship". Middle and upper class people also tend to dominate conversations, not hearing how it is for others, particularly working class people. Although we are barely touching on the subject in this article, we think that classism is an issue ripe for confrontation at the Bi Center.

Lastly, we'd like to discuss two of the many assumptions about bi-intimate/bisexual people. We chose these two because they were represented in recent Bi-Monthlies. One is that bi-intimacy either guarantees one constant, loving companions or condemns one to question the assumption that there is "only one special person with whom I can spend the rest of my life, if only I can find her/him."

A second assumption is that bisexual people are nothing more than their sexuality and are obsessed with sex, coupling with anything that moves. The reality is that people are diverse in all areas, including sexuality. Naturally, bisexual people share in this diversity. Doug likes to use the word "bi-intimate" to describe himself and others because this word gets away from society's inordinate emphasis and pressure on sex. Intimacy is the key.

As our citicisms have shown, we do not find the Bi Center to be perfect. We do want to emphasize that it has filled a supportive, intimate and growthful space in our lives. We have met friends, felt the support of our community, had fun and many stimulating interactions through the Bi Center. We encourage both women and men to come and enjoy the wonderful resource that is the Bisexual Center.

NO-HAI-KU-HERE

That full explosion
or orgasm
that comes
rarely
was so intense
last night
that after the shout
and the sudden spray
into your greedy mouth
the writhing ebbed
from blinding ecstacy
into helpless laughter

Jim Gove

SOLUTION TO LAST PUZZLE
(sorry but there was no winner!)

I	H	B		F	A		A			S	U	E		
C	O	S	M	I	C		B	L	U	E	S			
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A	N	T	E		I		S		S	U	E			

continued from page 4

hurt. My privacy invaded, my identity criticized, misunderstood. I knew she wasn't alone. There were thousands more just like her. They trained her. They helped her to place value judgments.

It was not yet time to speak. She planted her seeds of doubt. I'll just wait until the next newsletter comes out, and leave that lying around also, just for kicks. She may know, someday. Maybe even understand. That would be nice.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

POT LUCK

At 8:00 p.m., July 26, there will be a party/pot luck at Debby and Michael's in the East Bay. Come visit and share some good food, a warm evening, and let's play some rock 'n' roll. Call 261-2821 for directions and suggestions on what to bring. Or call the Bi Center 922-2300.

$2.00 for members. $3.00 for non-members.

CHAMPAGNE JAM

WANTED: Aspiring performers. All you creative people out there who enjoy getting together and sharing your talents now have an opportunity. We are having a Share Your Talents night at the Bi Center on August 23rd, starting at 8:00 p.m. If you have musical talent, enjoy reading your poetry, listening to other's creative works, etc. please come.

Bring munchies and come enjoy champagne punch for all. Let's have a wonderful time.

$3.00 for members. $4.00 for non-members.

PAUL MARIAH SOCIAL

We have a special opportunity to meet and talk with one of the West Coast coordinators of the Kinsey study on Homosexuality. He's Paul Mariah, well known Bay Area poet, editor/publisher of Manroot Press, and author of the poetry collection, "This Light Will Spread".

Paul, who was co-president with Sally Gearhart, of the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, has graciously consented to speak to us at a wine and cheese pot-luck special on August 2nd at 8:00 p.m. Come and join us for an evening of good food and good company.

Donation: $3.00 for members
$4.00 for non-members

HEAVEN'S HOT TUB PARTIES

Our last outing for HEAVEN'S HOT TUB proved so successful and so much fun that we've scheduled two more.

The first will be a Saturday night and all-day Sunday affair on July 19th and 20th. Saturday night begins at 8 p.m. and the option is available to stay overnight, or you can come any time Sunday. Bring food and drink to share (barbeque facilities are available). The cost will be $8 for Saturday night and all day Sunday, or $6 for all day Sunday.

The second outing will be all day Sunday, August 24th, beginning at noon. It will be $6.00.

For driving directions and car pooling call John Clay at 223-6438. The address is 769 El Patio Drive, El Sobrante (just North of Richmond).

GIVING OURSELVES OVER TO ABSOLUTE PLEASURE

We're getting together to go see the Rocky Horror Picture Show on Saturday night, September 6th. Come at 10 p.m. to the Bi Center to socialize, (some people will probably do makeup and costumes, too). We'll leave for the Strand Theater on Market Street by 11 p.m., in plenty of time to make the midnight show.

Two of our members are in the cast of "Celluloid Jam", the theater production of the movie's plot that's performed at the foot of the screen. To say nothing of the rice and toast that's being thrown in the audience! Should be fun.

Groups & Workshops

COMING-OUT BI

The process of coming out can be an exhilerating, rewarding experience. It can also be painful, frightening, and confusing. A lot of what happens to you depends on the support systems you develop and the kind of clearing and grounding you get.

Marilyn King and David Lourea, who have been leading the Wednesday night drop-in rap group at the Bi Center, have put together a powerful, dynamic consciousness-raising workshop for people who are beginning to discover their bisexuality. Coming-Out Bi is a workshop that examines the mythology about being bi; helps participants find creative ways of developing support systems; explores bisexuality from a social, emotional and sexual view. It will also be a time, place, and cause to celebrate.

TIME: Saturday, Aug. 23 from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Bi Center, 1757 Hayes in San Francisco
COST: $20.00 for Bi Center members
$25.00 for non-members

Preregistration is essential: to preregister send a check for $5.00 to David Lourea at the Bi Center by Aug 16.

OPEN RELATIONSHIP SEMINAR

Our second seminar for the upcoming two months will be a presentation by four of our eager, experienced (sadder but wiser?) members on Open Relationships, to be held Thursday evening, August 28th, from 8-10 p.m.

The presenters will be Michael and Debby Gray, Ed Sakir and Lee Olivier. If this is a subject you're interested in, come and join us. It should be lively and informative.

Donation: $2.00 for members
$3.00 for non-members

INTIMACY PART II

Dealing with closeness, jealousy, anger and other issues involved in creating and maintaining an intimate relationship. Our first intimacy workshop ("I Want To Be Close -- Wait, Not That Close") is not a prerequisite for this workshop. In this new one-day experience we will be taking a look at those three big issues that perhaps inevitably surface in relationships - how to be comfortable with closeness or "letting people in" without losing yourself; how to deal with feelings of jealousy or suffocation; and how to express and hear anger in an intimate relationship.

Led by Marilyn King and David Lourea
Time: 9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Date: Saturday July 26, 1980
Cost: $20.00 for Bi Center members
$25.00 for non-members

AN INTRODUCTION TO GESTALT

Thursday evening, July 24th, 7:30 P.M. Karl Anderson will give a two-hour lecture/discussion/demonstration of some of the basic principles and practices of Gestalt Therapy. He is a graduate of the Gestalt Institute of San Francisco and a member of the Bi Center.

Donation: $2.00

A donation of $1.00 is expected for groups held at the Bi Center or for the Bi Center. However, no one is ever turned away from any Bi Center function because of an inability to pay.

Community Bulletin Board

OFFICE HOURS

The Bi Center is open to the public on Tuesday nights, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm and Thursday nights, from 7:30 to 10:00 pm. Give us a call, or stop by,, look the place over and get acquainted. Our phone number is 922-2300.

BOARD MEETINGS

If you are interested in sharing your ideas and seeing what happens behind the scenes at the Bi Center, come to a Board Meeting. They are always the second Monday of the month. Our next ones will be July 14th and August 11th, at 7:30pm.

WEDNESDAY RAP GROUP

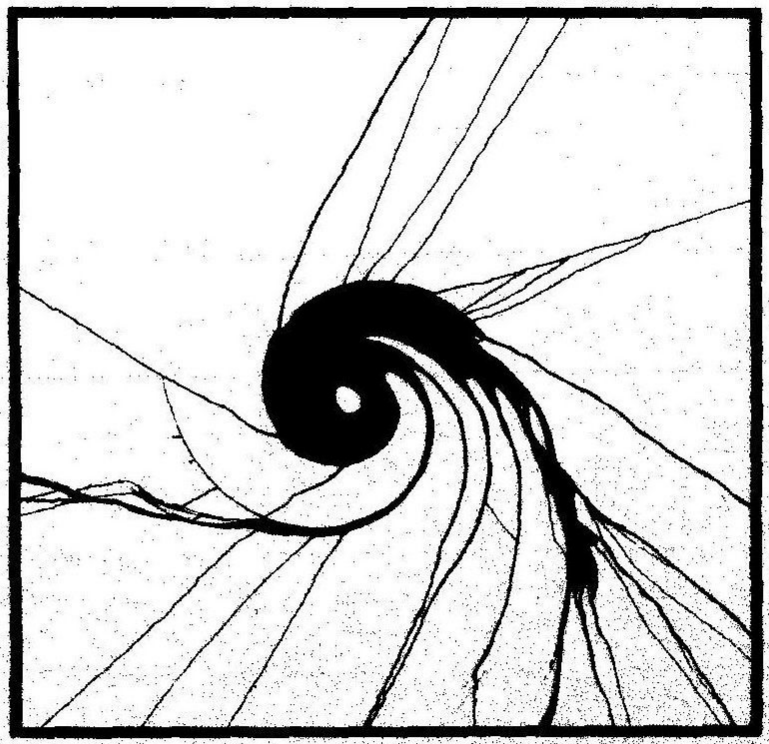
Our drop-in rap group is being held on Wednesday nights. The emphasis of the group is on getting to know one another in a casual rap rather than getting into "heavies" which can be dealt with only in on-going groups. Although an exchange of ideas and information can be very helpful, the group does not provide therapy; however, the Bi Center can provide referrals to qualified therapists.

We will be asking for a $1 donation to help support the work of the Center.

If you are interested in meeting other people and knowing more about the Bi Center, why not drop in on a Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

We receive numerous requests for speakers and media interviews. If you are interested in being part of this activity, you can contact Doug Friedman at 929-0671 or 929-8867.



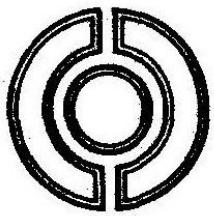
BI-MONTHLY CALENDAR 1980

july

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2 WED. NIGHT RAP 7:30	3 CAMPING TRIP	4	5
6 CAMPING TRIP ENDS	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 BOARD MEETING 7:30 page 10	15	16	17	18	19 page 9
page 8 20 HEAVEN'S HOT TUB PARTY	21	22	23	24 INTRO TO GESTALT SEMINAR page 9	25	26 POT LUCK EAST BAY INTIMACY WORK-SHOP PART 2 page 8
27	28	29	30	31		

august

					1	2 PAUL MARIAH'S SOCIAL 8pm page 8
3	4	5	6	7	8 NEWSLETTER PLANNING MEETING 7:30 pg. 2	9
10 NEWSLETTER LAYOUT MEETING noon pg. 2	11 BOARD MEETING 7:30 page 10	12	13	14	15	16 page 9
17 NEWSLETTER PASTE-UP MEETING noon pg. 2	18	19	20	21	22	23 COMING OUT 81 WORK-SHOP CANCELLED page 9
24 HEAVEN'S HOT TUB PARTY page 8	25	26	27 PAGE 10	28 OPEN RELATION-SHIPS SEMINAR page 9	29	30 page 8 SEPTEMBER 13 Rap Group
31						



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